

*As many as 47 states across the country have expanded prevention of college alcohol and other drug problems into a regional or statewide effort. Leaders of these initiatives are actively involving a mix of campus, community, business, and governmental agencies to create environmental change. Broad involvement in a comprehensive statewide plan has emerged as a key component of effective college prevention.*

### Benefits for campuses that are members of their Statewide Initiative\*:

- Brings media attention to student high-risk drinking without singling out Individual IHEs
- Opportunity to network with other IHEs and community members
- Potential for influencing state policy
- Increased training to campus and community coalitions
- Increased funding to campus and community coalitions
- Increased state/regional stakeholder buy-in to environmental approach

### Outcomes experienced by students on campuses who participate in their statewide initiative\*:

- 29% less likely to have missed a class due to their alcohol or drug use
- 26% more likely to not have had a drink in the last 30 days
- 47% less likely to provide alcohol to someone under the age of 21

### First and second year students were:

- ◇ 46% less likely to use alcohol or drugs at on-campus events
- ◇ 38% less likely to use alcohol at a fraternity or sorority event
- ◇ 33% less likely to have used alcohol at a bar or restaurant

*\*The above information comes from the Maine Higher Education Alcohol Prevention Partnership research project*

## *The Connecticut Statewide Healthy Campus Initiative*



A Partnership of Connecticut's Institutions of Higher Education, The Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, The Department of Higher Education and The Governor's Prevention Partnership



## *Statewide Initiatives: What we need to know*

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### *What are Statewide Initiatives?*

Statewide initiatives are concerted efforts by institutions of higher education, state government officials, and community organizations in a state to change aspects of the campus and community environment that contribute to high-risk drinking and other drug use. This is accomplished by creating and mobilizing campus and community coalitions to local action and collaborating on state policy change.

### *Why do presidents need to be Involved?*

National research such as the report Be Vocal, Be Visible, Be Visionary written by the President's Leadership Group, recommends that presidents participate in state coalitions addressing high-risk drinking to build support for public policy changes. With strong presidential support, statewide coalitions are better able to leverage the considerable resources and influence that institutions of higher education can bring to bear upon

state policy initiatives. Broad representation by presidents in statewide initiatives also demonstrates that all campuses grapple with the issue of alcohol and other drug (AOD) problems, share concerns about how to address it, and are equally committed to seeking effective solutions (Presidents Leadership Group, 1997).



### *How do presidents get involved?*

As many as a dozen states have launched a statewide initiative with a show of presidential support. Examples of successful “kick-off events” have featured the signing of a commitment statement by presidents. In some instances, existing statewide efforts have been energized by a public demonstration of presidential support. The statewide initiative in Illinois, for example, was originally established to decrease health and safety problems related to alcohol and other drug use on individual college campuses. Following a presidential signing event in 1999, the goals of the project were expanded to facilitate the creation of state-level support for local campus efforts and to identify specific policy solutions at the state level for prevention activities in higher education.

### *Does Connecticut have a Statewide Initiative?*

Yes! The Statewide Healthy Campus Initiative began in 2004 when nearly 25 campuses began meeting to develop a statewide action plan around alcohol and other drug prevention. Using examples from other successful states, the group began brainstorming to identify ways the state could expand its support of campus level AOD prevention. In June 2005, the group finalized and approved a Statewide Healthy Campus Initiative Action Plan. In January of 2006, the Presidents from 38 campuses across the state gathered for a landmark ceremony to sign a letter of commitment to the *Statewide Action Plan*. Since then, much progress has been made in implementing strategies from the plan. Please contact the co-chairs for information on the regular meetings of the Initiative.

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